

of our first President, his cabinet of four members was equally divided by as marked an opposition of principle as monarchy and republicanism, could bring into conflict. Had that could have been a directory, like positive and negative quantities in algebra the opposing wills would have balanced each other and produced a state of absolute inaction. But the President with calmness the opinions and reasons of each, decided course to be pursued, and kept the government steadily unaffected by the agitation. The public knew well the divisions of the cabinet, but never had an uneasy thought on account, because they knew also, they had provided a regular power which would keep the machine in steady motion. I speak with an intimate knowledge of these scenes, *quod pars fide*, as I may of others of a character entirely opposite. The third administration, which was of eight years, presents an example of harmony in a cabinet of six persons, to which perhaps history has furnished no parallel. There never during the whole time an instance of an unpleasant word between the members. We sometimes met under difference of opinion, but scarcely ever failed, by conversing reasoning, so as to modify each others' ideas as to produce unanimous result. Yet able and amiable as these members were, I am not certain this would have been the case had possessed equal and independent powers. Ill-defined limits their respective departments, jealousies, trifling at first nourished and strengthened by repetition of occasions, intruded without doors of designing persons to build an importance on themselves on the divisions of others might from small beginnings have produced persevering oppositions. But the power of decision in the President left no object for internal dissension and external intrigue was stifled in embryo by the knowledge which incendiaries possessed that no division they could form would change the course of the executive power. I am conscious that my participations in the executive authority have produced any bias in favor of the single executive, be the parts I have acted have been in the subordinate as well as superior stations, and because, if I know myself, what I